

**SITE PLAN REVIEW TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

**CONFERENCE ROOM A  
CITY HALL, MUNICIPAL COMPLEX, 1 JUNKINS AVENUE**

**2:00 PM**

**April 7, 2026**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Peter Stith, Chairperson, Assistant Planning Director; David Desfosses, Project Manager – Engineering & Operations; Chad Putney, Acting Deputy Fire Chief; Peter Britz, Director of Planning & Sustainability; Shanti Wolph, Chief Building Inspector; Zachary Cronin, Assistant City Engineer, Eric Eby, Parking and Transportation Engineer; Vincent Hayes, Planner II – Development Compliance

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Mike Maloney; Deputy Police Chief

**ADDITIONAL**

**STAFF PRESENT:** Stefanie Casella, Senior Planner; Jennifer Crockett, Administrative Assistant I

**MINUTES**

**I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. Approval of the **March 3, 2026** meeting minutes.

*Z. Cronin moved to approve the March 3, 2026 meeting minutes as presented, seconded by P. Britz.*

**II. OLD BUSINESS**

- A. The request of **304 Maplewood LLC (Owner)**, and **Planet Fitness (Applicant)**, for property located at **304 Maplewood Avenue** requesting amended Site Plan approval for a 1,011 square foot addition to the existing office building. Said property is located on Assessor Map 140 Lot 7 and lies within the Character District 4-L2 (CD4-L2) Historic Districts. (LU-26-5)

**SPEAKING TO THE APPLICATION**

[Timestamp 4:33] Rob Graham from Grondahl Family LLC came to present the application. Mr. Graham stated that the reference to Planet Fitness was no longer valid for the property. He reviewed staff comments and noted that they will set the fence clearly on their property and won't interrupt

the neighbor's fence. TAC members discussed the fence. Mr. Graham clarified that for the water line they have two curb stops that are adjacent to the property but only one line comes into the building. The curb stop directly in front in the right-of-way of Maplewood Avenue is not believed to service the building and could possibly serve the building across the street. They have scheduled for ground penetrating radar to come and confirm that the water line is not there. He stated that they only have one water line coming into their utility room. D. Desfosses stated that whatever waterline is not there should be removed from the plans before it goes to Planning Board.

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

[Timestamp 9:46] The public hearing was opened, no one spoke, the public hearing was then closed.

## **DISCUSSION AND DECISION OF THE BOARD**

*D. Desfosses made a motion to recommend approval of this application to the Planning Board with the following conditions:*

- 1. Show new fence within property line on plans.*
- 2. Handicapped parking spots and access aisle will be switched.*
- 3. Confirm active waterline and remove inactive one from plans.*

*P. Britz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

- B.** The request of **Jeannette MacDonald (Owner)**, for property located at **86 Farm Lane** requesting Preliminary and Final Subdivision approval and Site Plan Review approval to subdivide one lot into three lots with associated site improvements. Said property is located on Assessor Map 236 Lot 74 and lies within the Single Residence B (SRB) District. (LU-26-16)

## **SPEAKING TO THE APPLICATION**

[Timestamp 11:45] Engineer Eric Weinrieb and Patrick Cherney from Altus Engineering and Brett Berger from Flipping Bergers, LLC came to present the application. Mr. Weinrieb reviewed the changes made since the last meeting and noted that the 'no parking' signs in the existing right-of-way were approved by the Traffic and Safety Commission.

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

[Timestamp 14:47] The public hearing was opened, no one spoke, the public hearing was then closed.

## **DISCUSSION AND DECISION OF THE BOARD**

*D. Desfosses made a motion to recommend approval of this application to the Planning Board as presented. P. Britz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

- C. The request of **Hope for Tomorrow Foundation (Owner)**, for property located at **315 Banfield Road** requesting amended Site Plan approval for the construction of a 2,115 s.f. Library addition to the existing 24,150 s.f. St. Patrick Academy School building with associated site improvements. Said property is located on Assessor Map 266 Lot 5 and lies within the Industrial (I) District. (LU-26-18)

## **SPEAKING TO THE APPLICATION**

[Timestamp 16:03] Engineer Corey Belden from Altus Engineering and Jessica Simpson from St. Patrick's Academy came to present the application. Mr. Belden stated that a zoning application was submitted for the expansion of use. He reviewed the updates made regarding traffic circulation on the site. TAC members asked for clarification on the stacking lanes. Mr. Belden and Ms. Simpson clarified how the two lanes coming in would function. E. Eby asked how many additional cars can be stored in the double stacking area and wondered if this would be enough storage. Mr. Belden provided a rough estimate of the number of cars that could be stored. E. Eby emphasized that they needed to make sure this works and that the applicants needed to look at other physical storage such as a right turn lane or widening the shoulders on Banfield Road. TAC members further discussed whether the double stacking lanes, on-site parking, and school management would be sufficient to solve the traffic circulation issue and discussed possible alternatives and additional measures that can be taken.

[Timestamp 42:20] E. Eby expressed that he did not have enough information to give his ok. He wants data on how many cars are waiting, how many parking spaces are available, and how much extra car storage would be added from the double stacking lanes compared to now. Mr. Belden said that the proposed changes would be a significant improvement to the current conditions. D. Desfosses suggested that they approve the plan for traffic circulation and have a bond for Banfield Road improvement that will be executed if the traffic circulation issue is not resolved. A metric would be used to determine whether the traffic circulation is working correctly. An easement will be needed for road widening in the event that Banfield Road improvement is needed. Mr. Belden asked what an acceptable delay time would be. TAC members stated it needs to be free flowing traffic on Banfield Road, the concern is not traffic exiting the site but turning in. It is fine to have a car waiting to turn left onto the site, but it cannot start backing up with multiple cars queued trying to turn left.

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

[Timestamp 59:32] Elizabeth Bratter of 159 McDonough Street expressed that driving down the road during pickup time makes her fearful. She expressed that drivers should not be able to make a left hand turn in or out of the site. The driveway coming out should be in a different position as having cars trying to get in and out of the site is dangerous, especially during the winter. Drivers should have to go around to enter the site from the right.

[Timestamp 1:02:02] Jay Bisognano a parent whose three children attend St. Patrick's Academy stated that as a parent dropping off and picking up there everyday is a practical matter and if you are paying attention, it is not an issue. The school has done a lot of work to improve the conditions that exist today and he understands what TAC members are saying about trying to get more information to ensure it will absolutely work. But in his opinion, it's an impossibility to ensure and that the condition that is there today is improving and capacity is not increasing and that they should take what they can get. If the school decides not to do this, you're left with a problem. He asks that this project gets approved so that the conditions can be improved.

### **DISCUSSION AND DECISION OF THE BOARD**

[Timestamp 1:03:33] E. Eby addressed the ability to prohibit left hand turns into and from the site. A median island would need to be constructed on Banfield Road and a very long right turn lane would be needed. With a 50/50 split of traffic coming in and out it would be very inconvenient for a lot of people and would not be a realistic option.

*P. Britz made a motion to recommend approval of this application to the Planning Board with the following conditions:*

- 1. Variance must be granted prior to application to Planning Board.*
- 2. Applicant must construct the bike path on the east side of the site.*
- 3. E. Eby will develop condition for traffic control measures which will potentially include a Bond for shoulder widening of Banfield Road, an Easement to the City, and monitoring timeframe for traffic flow improvement.*

*D. Desfosses seconded the motion.*

[Timestamp 1:05:05] Z. Cronin asked about addressing DPW's comment regarding the construction of the bike path. Mr. Belden stated that the raingarden was not encroaching into the easement area and that nothing has changed from the original easement. D. Desfosses asked if there was wetland in the way. Mr. Belden stated that he did not believe it was a designated wetland and was a man-made drainage ditch.

*D. Desfosses seconded the motion again. He added the condition that the applicant must construct the bike path on the east side of the site. The motion passed unanimously.*

### **III. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. The request of Regan Electric CO INC (Owner), and Chinburg Development (Applicant), for property located at 94 Langdon Street and 98 Cornwall Street requesting Site Plan Review approval to merge the two lots, demolish the existing buildings, and construct three (3) single-family dwellings with associated site**

improvements. Said property is located on Assessor Map 139 Lots 1, 8 and lies within the Mixed Residential Business (MRB) District. (LU-25-175)

### **SPEAKING TO THE APPLICATION**

[Timestamp 1:09:09] Shawn Tobey from Haley Ward, Shawna Sammis and Alexandra Binns from Chinburg Development came to present the application. Mr. Tobey reviewed the history of the application, noting that they had obtained a Variance for the frontage. He then reviewed staff comments. C. Putney stated that it will need to be a private street.

### **PUBLIC HEARING**

[Timestamp 1:14:51] David Rheume of 81 Langdon Street stated that in general he is supportive of the three single family homes on this combined lot. His concern is the proposed single access way from Langdon Street. This is his first time learning that it will have to be a private road. His understanding is that the single access way stems from the idea that access from Cornwall Street is not possible for dwelling units 2 and 3. He finds it difficult to believe as historical maps show that that has been established as a street for many years and has had properties that have solely resided on that portion of Cornwall Street north of McDonough Street. If it were possible, it would have many benefits such as a significant reduction in the total amount of pavement, access could be at right angles at the stub of Cornwall Street through the 48 feet of frontage the combined properties will have, which would continue to allow for plowing and an area for snow accumulation in the winter time. The other major benefit would be that it could allow dwelling unit 1 up against Langdon Street to be realigned to be similar to other properties with the potential to have a two car garage with a two car parking area in front of it, which would match the configuration of his home and his neighbors at 91 and 82 Langdon Street. A small road with three homes on it is not the overall look and feel of Langdon Street and all of the cars will be coming out onto Langdon Street immediately opposite 91 Langdon Street's driveway. It's not a huge amount of traffic but it would eliminate both that and it would be more natural for emergency vehicle response, and the other units would have Cornwall Street addresses. He would ask before they make a determination on recommendation to the Planning Board that they understand the legality of saying that Cornwall Street cannot be accessed from this combined property.

[Timestamp 1:18:26] Elizabeth Bratter of 159 McDonough Street stated that she has lived in that neighborhood for 35 years and that Cornwall Street has been plowed by the city. According to the maps there is another paper street that goes right down the Chinburg property and there is a paper street at the end of Cornwall Street that goes left and then out to the railroad tracks. Her biggest concern is that in order to get in and out, you would have to turn around, and what would happen if they had a fire. Ms. Bratter was concerned about how fire trucks would access the site. She asked with the sewer easement on Cornwall Street, would they have to dig there. She stated that it would be nice for Cornwall Street to be an access to that property with an open gate to allow for fire truck access. To her that portion of Cornwall Street that backs up to the Regan property is not a paper street, the paper street is when it goes left and back towards the railroad tracks.

[Timestamp 1:20:30] John Paine owner of 91 and 82 Langdon Street, stated that he and his wife are excited for the development and that it is a good change for the neighborhood. He said that they

want the new construction to be a part of the neighborhood and the landscaping doesn't send that message. The landscaping makes it seem separate from the community than what he would like to see. He would like to see the Board's opinion on what appropriate plantings are. In particular, the three trees on the border between 82 Langdon Street and the site have mature heights of 60 feet. One of the things he loves about the neighborhood is the views of the pond and he is concerned about the view impact for those further up on McDonough Street as the trees are providing a significant mass and hang significantly over the property line. He commented on the heights of the landscaping towards the back of the 82 Langdon Street property line and that the house at 82 Langdon Street is less than half the height of those trees. He would like the development to be more integrated into the community than is currently shown.

[Timestamp 1:23:33] Elizabeth Bratter of 159 McDonough Street stated that on 41 Salem Street three houses we developed that have garages and main doors on the inside like what is proposed with this project, but the houses were asked to put in front steps and a door on the front whether it was fake or real, as the majority of that neighborhood has front steps and people often sit on them and that is how you get to know your neighbors. She would like to see front steps added to the unit that faces Langdon Street to make it cohesive with the rest of the neighborhood. She stated that it would look funny with all of the houses having doors facing the street except for this one. She would like this to be considered as a solution for how they can be more involved with the neighborhood.

## **DISCUSSION AND DECISION OF THE BOARD**

[Timestamp 1:25:10] P. Britz stated that the landscaping plan that shows the arborvitae is valid but would create a block, a tree provides a view and habitat, and arborvitae would not provide any of that. Ms. Sammis said that a third party creates the landscaping plan and they scale it back 80%. She said the feedback was good and that they would take another look at the landscaping. P. Britz asked if they had any response regarding the access through Cornwall Street. Ms. Sammis explained that they had originally wanted to keep the lots as is and not merge them and have access off of Cornwall Street for 2 units and an access off Langdon Street for 1 unit. Through review of the project and the 3 units by the city's and their legal departments it was determined that they could not use Cornwall Street because it is not a city owned street. She said that it is very difficult to determine the legal standing of historic streets. She said that if you drive down Cornwall Street today, the 1<sup>st</sup> house on the right their property extends over the line shown for Cornwall Street and they are using that as their driveway and parking for their home.

[Timestamp 1:28:22] C. Putney said that they need to determine if a fire engine can make the turn into the site off Langdon Street. He is ok with having to back up once or twice because that is needed for all of that neighborhood. He said that they need to make sure they can adequately enter and exit the site. D. Desfosses stated that the comments regarding the front door are good and that the applicants should consider it.

*P. Britz made a motion to recommend approval of this application to the Planning Board with the following conditions:*

1. *An easement to the City is required for water metering, valve control, and leak detection. This easement shall have a provision to allow the City to upsize and/or connect the line to Cornwall Street in the future if determined to be necessary.*
2. *Show existing 10-12" sewer main crossing lot on Cornwall Street and consider sewer connection there. An easement to the City is required for the sewer main pipe crossing the lot on Cornwall Street.*
3. *Revise the landscaping plan.*
4. *The driveway will need to be named and approved by City Council.*
5. *A fire access turning template is required.*
6. *A 1" water line is insufficient for three single family dwellings, so a common line should be at least 2" in size and that size should be confirmed as large enough by the MEP engineer. All lines to homes must be 1" minimum. If fire suppression is required by the Fire Department, additional or larger water lines will be required.*
7. *Need air gap between stormwater system and foundation drains. Homes need to be mechanically drained via sumps. Watertight construction required.*
8. *City suggests slab on grade construction but in no case should there be more than a crawl space with no mechanicals due to high groundwater possible during storms in that area.*
9. *Sidewalk must be 5.5' in width, excluding curb.*
10. *Curb must be granite.*
11. *Brick inverts in sewer manholes are required.*

*D. Desfosses seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

**B.** The request of **Rafferty Investment Group LLC (Owner)**, for property located at **64 Bridge Street** requesting Site Plan Review approval for demolition of the existing structure and construction of a ten (10) room three-story Inn with associated site improvements. Said property is located on Assessor Map 126 Lot 55 and lies within the Mixed Residential Business (MRB) District, Character District 4 (CD4) and Downtown Overlay District. (LU-26-36)

## **SPEAKING TO THE APPLICATION**

[Timestamp 1:33:33] Engineer Steve Haight from Civil Works New England, Mckayla Glazier from Open Concepts Contracting LLC, and Scott Rafferty Owner/Developer came to present the application. Mr. Haight reviewed the history of the project noting their conversations with

Eversource regarding the transformer location. Eversource suggested putting the transformer onto City property across Bridge Street where a transformer and another sector cabinet are located. He stated that this would allow them to preserve a parking space or two on site. D. Desfosses stated that as it is a City parcel it is up to City Council to allow it or not and the transformer would be available to other buildings to use. He said the license would be to Eversource for the transformer. TAC members further discussed the transformer.

[Timestamp 1:38:17] Mr. Haight reviewed their responses to staff comments. He stated that he was unsure how they would address the landscaping with the site developed as it is. D. Desfosses suggested that they could do planting beds up against the building behind the sidewalk. P. Britz stated that it must be 5 feet wide to count as open space, if not they would need to request for a Variance. D. Desfosses mentioned that Eversource is looking at resupplying power to Hanover Street due to the approved developments and future development being explored in the area. TAC members discussed the potential power supply changes, the transformer, and what impacts it would have on the project. C. Putney asked about the roof deck. Mr. Rafferty said they have enough space to add a second stairwell to the roof deck and clarified that the table layout in the meeting room was a placeholder. TAC Members discussed how solid waste would be managed on the site. S. Wolph asked if there was enough room for a wheelchair to maneuver at the main entrance and not be encumbered by the stairs. Mr. Haight explained that the architectural plan needs to be updated to match the actual grading and that that area is pretty much flat and would not require stairs.

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

[Timestamp 1:49:24] Elizabeth Bratter of 159 McDonough Street handed out a written statement to TAC Members, from which she preceded to read from. She questioned the clearance allowance of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor balconies over the transformer on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor. She asked why there were rear balconies overlooking the neighbor's yard and about the size of the overhang from the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors and if the balconies counted towards it. She noted that the application did not show rear views of the property and when looking behind at 282 Hanover Street it appeared as if the fence line was crossing over into that property. Ms. Bratter said that it was questionable whether the proposed transformer pad would fit without going over the property line and wondered how the noncombustible objects needed to protect the neighbors were going to fit there as well. She said that the project should not be classified as an inn but as a hotel due to the two bars, catering, and restaurant. She said that the roof top deck looked close to the neighboring structure at 58 Bridge Street and that she believes it is supposed to be 25 feet away. Ms. Bratter asked where the required 384.6 feet of open space would be located and if the overhang and balconies would impact the space in the rear.

[Timestamp 1:56:23] Kaleigh Bullock of 282 Hanover Street said that she disputes the disclosed property line. She stated that she will be working with a surveyor to have her own survey conducted. Ms. Bullock said that the fence was installed by Daryl Kent, a previous owner of 282 Hanover Street. The current plans for the patio, driveway area, and potentially the transformer would impede almost a foot onto her hardscaped patio and garden. She said that the structure of the building seriously impedes the privacy of her home and that any amount of space that is debatable through the survey process is critical to her and her family. Ms. Bullock stated that she has life safety concerns regarding a rooftop bar next to her home and a residential neighborhood.

## DISCUSSION AND DECISION OF THE BOARD

[Timestamp 1:58:29] Chair Stith asked Mr. Rafferty to provide an overview of the project and how the property would be leased or rented. Mr. Rafferty explained that it is an inn that would allow a function space on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor to be used by caterers, there are 10 rooms upstairs, and a roof top deck with no immediate plan for full-service food and beverage to be provided there. He stated that it wouldn't be a hotel as the space will function as a group rental where one party or adjoining parties that have some sort of relation are renting out the entire building themselves. The basement will be used for storage, washing machines and dryers, and trash. Mr. Rafferty said that there is no immediate plan for a restaurant and there will be no stove, just a microwave.

*D. Desfosses made a motion to postpone the application to the May meeting. Z. Cronin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

*D. Desfosses left the meeting.*

- C. The request of **The City of Portsmouth – New Franklin School (Owner)**, for property located at **1 Franklin Drive** requesting Site Plan Review for the construction of three (3) additions to the existing New Franklin Elementary School with associated site, grading, drainage, and utilities improvements. Said property is located on Assessor Map 220 Lot 2 and lies within the Municipal (M) District. (LU-26-37)

## SPEAKING TO THE APPLICATION

[Timestamp 2:02:47] Engineers Eric Doremus and Patrick Crimmins from Tigh and Bond, Architect Matthew Giffin from Banwell Architects, and Brian Cisneros and Ken Linchey from the New Franklin School came to present the application. Mr. Doremus reviewed the application and stated that no trees would be cleared as a part of the project, so there would be no direct wetland impacts. He reviewed their responses to staff comments and said that they are requesting to do a formal wetland delineation to verify the location and size of the wetlands. From their review they will not be within any of the 100-foot buffers. He said that in 2023 a sound study was completed for this property associated with the installation of the noise barriers on interstate 95. Mr. Doremus said that they are currently evaluating the City's Municipal Green Building Policy and are looking for areas to work into the project to comply. Z. Cronin asked them to state the location of the water meter in the building. Mr. Linchey explained that both meters are fed into the backside of the custodial locker and that the water no longer comes from the south, as it loops around the back through the playground. E. Eby stated that the handicapped space access aisle needs to be 8ft wide to be van accessible. He also clarified that there is just a privacy fence along that portion of interstate 95, not a sound barrier, and that the fence is just being rebuilt.

## PUBLIC HEARING

[Timestamp 2:10:43] The public hearing was opened, no one spoke, the public hearing was then closed.

### **DISCUSSION AND DECISION OF THE BOARD**

[Timestamp 2:11:10] P. Britz stated that they did not need a full wetland delineation and that they could just have a wetland scientist confirm they are not impacting the wetland buffer. TAC members discussed the wetland buffer. E. Eby asked if the electric vehicle parking spaces were just for parking or if they would also include charging. Mr. Doremus confirmed that it is just parking and that they will be providing stubs, so that charging stations could be added in the future.

*No action was taken as this is a City project.*

### **IV. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 4:09 PM.